

**Executive Committee for Highway Safety  
Older Driver Safety  
Working Group Meeting Minutes – Mtg. #2  
November 28, 2005**

**Location:**

NC AARP, Raleigh @ 11:00 a.m.

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

Jane Stutts	Phyllis Bridgman	Suzanne LaFollette-Black
Cliff Braam	Frank Winecoff	Beth Horner
Bill Turner	Davis Fort	Carol Williams
Helen Savage	Stacie Cruz	Ronda Deitch (guest)

**Scribe:**

Helen Savage / Jane Stutts (in Major Munday's absence)

**Minutes:**

Jane Stutts welcomed those in attendance and asked committee members to introduce themselves for the benefit of two new representatives to the group, Stacie Cruz and Beth Horner. Stacie is a project manager with the NC Governor's Highway Safety Program, and Beth is its new public relations manager.

**Task I – Background for Identification of Potential Strategies**

The primary item on the agenda for the day was the identification of potential strategies for development by the Working Group and presentation to the Executive Committee. Before opening up the discussion, Cliff Braam offered a brief overview of the functioning of the Executive Committee (ECHS). The ECHS is comprised of senior-level representatives of agencies impacting transportation in the state and is chaired by David King, Deputy Secretary of the NCDOT. There are now eight active working groups providing input to the Committee on various high priority highway safety areas. The Older Driver Working Group (ODWG) is one of these. (For more information about the ECHS and its various working groups, see the committee's website at <http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/traffic/ECHS/default.html>.)

The ECHS meets quarterly at the state engineering offices on Beryl Drive near the state fairgrounds. Its next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 18, beginning at 9:30 a.m. At these meetings, the chairs of each of the working groups are asked to present any recommendations their group has developed. After discussion of the recommendation, the Executive Committee makes a decision to either (1) approve the recommendation and send it forward to an identified host agency; (2) send the recommendation back to the working group for further clarification and/or development; or (3) put a temporarily hold on the recommendation (e.g., if it requires legislation, but the timing is not optimal for pursuing the legislation, or if a responsible agency already has too many other tasks on its plate at the moment).

Due to the growing number of working groups, the group chairs are asked to present only one recommendation to the ECHS per meeting, and to make copies of the strategy

available to Cliff two weeks prior to a scheduled meeting for distribution to committee members.

Although a number of strategies have been submitted and approved by some of the working groups formed, they have not as yet been posted on the ECHS web site. However, Cliff noted that the Executive Committee web site would soon have separate sections for each working group that group members could use to post relevant information, etc. He also noted that since our group only recently assumed the role of an official ECHS working group, a reasonable goal might be to have one or two strategies ready to present to the ECHS at its April (2006) meeting.

Jane noted that the format that the ECHS had adopted for developing its strategies was the same as that used in the development of guidelines to the states for the national Strategic Highway Safety Plan. This plan, developed under the leadership of the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO), is available on the web at <http://safety.transportation.org/>. The “Guidelines for Reducing Collisions Involving Older Drivers” is also available at that website (Volume 9 in the series of guides produced thus far). Jane distributed a copy of a sample strategy from the guide that can serve as a model. An electronic version of the strategy will also be sent out with the minutes of the meeting (for assistance in formatting our draft strategies, and not necessarily for the content area, although the group was encouraged to refer to the guide as a resource document).

Cliff noted that the typical approach followed by the working groups was to identify one or two strategies at a time for development and have a small subgroup of its members work on a rough draft of the strategy to bring back to the group for discussion and further development. Some of this activity can also occur via email in-between scheduled meetings. A question was raised about possible overlap among the various working groups (e.g., older drivers and intersection safety). Cliff responded that part of his responsibilities as a member of all the various working groups was to be aware of potential overlaps when strategies were discussed and developed, and coordinate with the groups to avoid duplication of effort.

Suzanne LaFollette-Black noted that since our group had already identified several key areas of activity, it made sense to build on these efforts when developing our initial strategies to recommend to the ECHS. Jane Stutts said that the AASHTO Guidelines for Reducing Collisions Involving Older Drivers might also serve as a starting point for considering recommendations, although this document was developed as a more general guide to all state DOTs.

## **Task II – Identification of Potential Strategies**

Rather than try to brainstorm strategies outright, Dr. Forte suggested, and the group concurred, that a better approach might be to first specify our objectives, or what it is we want to accomplish, and then identify the strategies or means to accomplish these objectives. The following objectives were identified by the group:

- Improve community capacity to inform the population about available services, options, and programs.
- Improve roadway drivability (e.g., by improving roadway signage).

- Increase awareness of older driver issues among law enforcement, physicians, service providers, and older adults themselves.
- Educate older drivers about age-related changes that affect driving.
- Identify at-risk older drivers and provide remediation and other supportive services (role of DMV, physicians, family, etc.).
- Improve and expand service options for people who can't or don't want to continue driving.

Following a short lunch break, the group discussed how to go about prioritizing these objectives and developing its strategies. Phyllis Bridgman suggested that the group not try to take on all aspects of safe mobility (for example, walkability and transportation options), but instead focus on improving safety for older drivers. She suggested that our strategies address (1) improving the roadway for older drivers, and (2) identifying at-risk older drivers. These are both areas where the coalition has already been active.

There was some discussion of other related strategies, including license renewal policies, and also the need to educate the general population of older drivers. Note was made of the Coalition's involvement in the upcoming in-service training of driver license examiners. Also, Dr. Forte observed that rather than setting as a goal making roadways safer for older adults, the focus might be on making roadways friendlier (to older adults but also all drivers), since the safety benefits may sometimes be difficult to measure.

It was agreed that the two active subcommittees of the SDSC/ODWG should meet before the next full meeting of the coalition to identify specific strategies that they would like to put forward. The goal would be to have one or more strategies ready to present to the ECHS at its April meeting.

### **Task III – Brief Updates on Current Activities**

Dr. Forte had circulated printed copies of some new designs for highway guide/informational signs that the roadway subcommittee hopes to pilot at select locations in the state. The group is working with Kevin Lacy on improving road signage for the benefit of older drivers but also visitors to new parts of the state and, again, all roadway users.

Suzanne reported on a very successful “Pilot Safe Driving and Mobility Options Forum” that members of the Coalition led in Wilmington on November 14. The forum brought together a variety of local people from planning, health services and aging perspectives to begin the process of improving safe mobility for the community's older residents. Suzanne, Sarah Davis from AAA, Jane Stutts, and Audrey Straight from the AAA National office all participated in the half-day event.

Susan Stewart, Phyllis Bridgman, and Jane Stutts also participated in AARP's annual driver safety conference in Wilmington on November 17-18. The conference, led by Bill Turner with help from Suzanne, included training in AARP's new Driver Safety curriculum. (Lieutenant Charles Jones also represented Major Munday at the conference.)

## Action Items

Name	Item
Sub-committees	Meet prior to the next full meeting of the Older Driver Working Group to identify and begin developing strategies. Keep Jane informed of scheduled meetings.
Jane	Distribute updated roster and an electronic version of the sample strategy (both to be included when minutes distributed).

- The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:15 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, February 1, 2006, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at AARP offices in Raleigh (with an optional one-hour extension for subcommittee meetings)

Interested members are also invited to attend the Executive Committee for Highway Safety meeting on January 18 at 9:30 a.m. (contact Jane or Cliff for location and directions).